

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 06068 270547Z

17

ACTION ERDA-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 OES-06 IO-13 ACDA-07

NRC-05 JUSE-00 ERDE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /100 W

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R 261136Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5535

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 6068

FOLLOWING REPEAT BOMBAY 1034 SENT ACTION NEW DELHI

INFO CALCUTTA/MADRAS 26 APR 76.

QUOTE:

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BOMBAY 1034

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: TECH IN

SUBJ: TARAPUR

1. BOMBAY SUNDAY EDITIONS OF TIMES OF INDIA AND ECONOMIC TIMES FRONT-PAGEDSTORIES QUOTING GOI ENERGY MINISTER K.C.PANT AS SAYING IN CALCUTTA THAT US WILL CONTINUE SUPPLYING URANIUM FOR TARAPUR REACTORS. OTHER MAJOR BOMBAY SUNDAY PAPER "SUNDAY STANDARD" CARRIED BRIEF STORY ON INSIDE PAGE GIVING SIMILAR ACCOUNT. ECONOMIC TIMES' ACCOUNT IS GIVEN TWO COLUMN HEADLINE "US TO FULFILL URANIUM COMMITMENT" AT TOP LEFTAHAND SIDE OF PAPER, SO IT IS ONE OF FIRST STORIES AVERAGE READER WILL SEE.

2. ALL THREE PAPERS START STORIES BY QUOTING K.C.PANT AS SAYING "UNITED STATES HAS INFORMED INDIA THAT IT WOULD ABIDE BY ITS COMMITMENT TO SUPPLY URANIUM TO THE TARAPUR NUCLEAR PROJECT".

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ECONOMIC TIMES ATTRIBUTES QUOTE TO SAMACHAR (NATIONAL WIRE SERVICE)

AND TIMES OF INDIA CITES SAMACHAR AS SOURCE OF ITS WHOLE STORY.
DUNDAY STANDARD GIVES NO ATTRIBUTION.

3. TIMES OF INDIA AND SUNDAY STANDARD LEAVE MINISTER'S QUOTATION STAND WITHOUT ANY QUALIFICATION BY ECONOMIC TIMES, WHICH PLAYED STORY MOST PROMINENTLY, NOTED THAT PANT WAS COMMENTING ON A REPORT THAT NRC WAS RECONSIDERING ITS DECISION AGAINST SUPPLY OF URANIUM TO TARAPUR (SIC). THIS COMMENT WOULD PROBABLY ALERT A SOPHISTICATED READER TO POSSIBILITY THAT ISSUE NOT YET SETTLED AS DEFINITELY AS MINISTER'S STATEMENT WOULD INDICATE.

4. COMMENT: THESE STORIES ALL DATED CALUTTA WHERE MINISTER PASSED THROUGH AIRPORT ENROUTE TO DEDICATION OF A LARGE HYDRO PROJECT. THIS REPORT OF COURSE IS INACCURATE BECAUSE WE HAVE GIVEN NO NEW ASSURANCE REGARDING SHIPMENT FUEL AND FOR THAT REASON ALONE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN CENSORED IN NEW DELHI OR BOMBAY. MOREOVER, SETHNA TOLD ME ON THURSDAY THAT HE IS STILL SUPPRESSING ALL PIECES SPECULATING ON OUTCOME OF THIS ISSUE ALTHOUGH HE SAID GOI FEELS IT WILL SOON HAVE TO PERMIT PUBLICATION OF STORIES BASED ON NRC PROCEEDINGS WHICH ARE PART OF PUBLIC RECORD IN US.

5. CONGEN BELIEVES CALCUTTA STORY APPEARED BECAUSE OF VGAP IN GBI CENSORSHIP PROGRAM OUTSIDE PRINCIPAL CENTERS OR PLACES GENERATING STORY. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT REFLECTS ANY INTENTIGN TO ESCALATE THIS PROBLEM INTO A PUBLIC ISSUE, AT LEAST AT THIS TIME. NEVER-THELESS, STORIES LIKE THIS ONE WILL MAKE IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT FOR GOI TO CONTINUE TO HANDLE THIS MATTER IN LOW KEY, ESPECIALLY IF NRC SHOULD DECIDE TO DELAY FURTHER FUEL SUPPLY BY HOLDING EXTENSIVE HEARINGS.

COURTNEY

UNQUOTE.
SAXBE

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Message Attributes

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